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Pastoral Letter

—OF—

The Right Rev. John T. McNally

Bishop of Calgary

—TO—

The Clergy and Laity of His Diocese.

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Bishop's House, Calgary, Alberta

March 1st 1915

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OF ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE

**John, by the Grace of God and favor of the
Apostolic Sec. Bishop of Calgary:**

**To the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese: Health
and Benediction in the Lord.**

BELoved Co-Workers AND BRETHREN IN CHRIST:

A double appeal has recently been sent out to the whole world by the only person in this world whose right and duty it is to make such an appeal, and its nature, as well as the source from which it comes, stamps upon it the imperative claim to our most serious attention. It is an appeal which we cannot, we must not disregard.

The first part of this appeal by the newly-elected Supreme Pontiff is woven, in His first encyclical, around the announcement of the motto and program of his pontificate: "to bring back among men the power of the charity of Christ". The second contains the first great application of that program, an exhortation in the name of christian love to pray and strive for a cessation of the inhuman struggle that is now disgracing, depopulating and impoverishing the world.

That some man or number of men bear the moral responsibility for the carnage and destruction now being wrought by millions of armed men, is a fact that all must admit; but to place the responsibility, or to

judge and declare the merits of this almost world-wide conflict, is not within the province of the office of Father of all the faithful. He from His lonely watch-tower, within which, as a sad result of human greed, injustice and apathy, He is practically a prisoner, looks out over the broad world, and sees between the combatants no distinction of race or condition. He sees only brothers in Christ and brothers of Christ, for all of whom the Cross was raised aloft and the regenerating blood poured out in atoning sacrifice. And as with agonized gaze He beholds the light piteously go out daily in thousands of young eyes, the maimed and broken bodies of so many of the flower of Europe's manhood, the desolated countries and ruined homes, and the ever-widening circle of sorrow and misery that flows from it all, how can His great, fatherly heart do other than give world-wide utterance to His call to mankind, to lift their hearts to their Creator, in supplication for a return to christian love and a cessation of these fratricidal horrors?

I send you herewith attached a copy of our Holy Father's decree in this connection, together with His beautiful prayer for peace; and a copy of the first encyclical letter of His Holiness. These I desire to have distributed, so that if possible every Catholic family in the diocese may have one, and so have the opportunity of doing what, with all the energy of my soul and all the fatherly solicitude of my heart, I now urge them to do—namely, to make an earnest and intimate study of this encyclical in its every part, so that its pregnant lessons may take deep root in their hearts, and produce in each one of them such share of fruit as will make all unite in that brotherly love which alone can mark us as true disciples of Christ, and, inspired by that love, make us do our share, by word and deed, in remedying the four crying evils, which Pope Benedict so well outlines as the source of all the trouble that afflicts the human family today.

I cannot, in this necessarily brief communication,

dwell adequately on all the points touched upon in the Holy Father's letter, but I should like to single out a few, so as to give special emphasis to your study of the lessons they involve.

In calling upon us to realize in our lives the sign that marks the children of Christ—the love of one another—the visible head of Christ's earthly kingdom opens His message with the assurance that in writing it He is moved by an unspeakable love for all mankind. In charity towards all, He reminds them of the Saviour's birthday message, "peace on earth to men of good will", and finding himself, on assuming the office of Christ's Vicar, confronted with this awful war "the darkest and saddest spectacle in history", as He well describes it, He begs, "of those, who hold in their hands the destiny of peoples, to give ear to that voice"—the angels' song of peace, and with no self-interest, but with a heart equally open and impartial to all, He impressively asks of all: "Let them not suffer Our voice of father and friend to pass away unheeded".

The four chief disorders of present-day society to which our Holy Father refers are, in brief: first, the lack of mutual love among men; second, disregard for authority; third, unjust and unreasoning class enmity; fourth, material aims in life to the exclusion of all higher things.

As to the first, from which indeed, flow all the rest, the Vicar of Christ points out that His Master passed His earthly life, "as though the whole scope and purpose of His coming were to make men love each other". "Setting aside every difference of race, of language and of interest, He puts the selfsame prayer on the lips of all, 'Our Father, Who art in Heaven.' " Surely then in this common Father, and in the everlasting Fatherland, men can find bond of sympathy strong enough to set at nought the paltry differences arising from the accidental conditions of this fleeting world.

And yet these are the actors in the endless warfare, bloody or unbloody, that desolates this life—men, descended all from one common ancestor, sharing the same nature, belonging to the same human family, all brethren, children of the same Father in Heaven.

We do not need to look to Europe for example, for unfortunately this curse follows the human race here as elsewhere. Senseless antipathies, mutually destructive rivalries, baseless dissensions, destroy the harmony of life—and to what purpose, especially among us Catholics, to whom it is given to possess the fullness of Christ's blessings? Among us, looking at the question in the light of common sense, what is there to exclude or diminish the power of Christ's brotherly love?

As to Catholicity, we all have the same right to its advantages, with no regard whatever for the race, language, or other material condition of our ancestors. As to country, to all men of good-will, no matter what their earthly origin, who are here to make this country their home, it should suffice to call themselves Canadians. What is the meaning of patriotic duty, as God intended it, other than loyal co-operation with our fellow-beings in the community in which we find ourselves, aiding one another through the pilgrimage of this life, till it be swallowed up in life unending? We are living in the present, not in the generations gone by; and a union productive of ever-increasing greatness here, and culminating in the possession of perfect union in the real and eternal Fatherland, can never be achieved by futile and senseless harping back to the corners of the earth where our various grandfathers chanced to spend their little period of probation. I could never believe that men of real intelligence, and of genuine faith in an eternity with our common Father, could sincerely share in the racial "frenzy", as the Holy Father portrays it, which, in its last analysis, is of the earth, earthy, the incarnation of an empty vanity and a contemptible selfishness, and

utterly unworthy of minds imbued with true brotherly love and heavenly aspirations.

Let Pope Benedict's appeal, as "father and friend", elicit a sincere response in our filial hearts. It is not for us to reform the great, erring world, but what we can and must do, is to reform our own selves, and show forth fruit worthy of our Christian name and profession. Let us here strive to furnish an example of what Christ's genuine love may produce of mutual confidence and brotherhood. Let priests realize that they are bound, in the sacred duty of charity, to strive with all their might to accommodate themselves to the material circumstances of the people to whom they minister, to speak their native language if at all possible, and to enter into sympathy with everything that is dear to them, recognizing all as their children equally loved. And the people, on their side, should be reasonable, and not expect the impossible. In Christian charity and common sense, they too should recognize, that sooner or later they must accommodate themselves to the conditions of that country which they have made their home, and that it is useless to try to maintain their mode of striving for the eternal home by methods different from those called for by their daily life here. We use this life but as a passage to the eternal dwelling place, and everything that goes to form our daily habits here, should be made the instruments of our advance to the one great and final end of all our striving. Whoever sets up the claim that special material elements, quite outside the ordinary uses of our life, are essential to our soul's salvation, is saying what in the logic of his heart he must know to be untrue, and is hence deceiving his hearers, and, instead of helping their spiritual life, is placing upon it a handicap, that will probably work far more to its detriment than its advantage. These mistaken teachers are in reality striving for material profit alone; though they delude others, and possibly at times themselves, with the imaginary cloak of religious exigency.

And the great loser from such misguided teachers is religion and the life of the soul. They serve only the purpose of the enemy, to divide us by craftily sowing in our midst the seed of discord. And the utterly meaningless and useless dissensions that are caused by these meddlesome and unreasonable agitators open an easy way to the enemies of God and the Church to gain the victory over us, when they see our defence weakened by divided counsels.

"Never," says our Holy Father "was human brotherhood more preached than now"—proclaimed "as one of the highest creations of modern civilization." "Yet the truth is that men never acted towards each other in less brotherly fashion than now." And this because the true source of it all is ignored or lost sight of. How disheartening it all is, as its hollowness is revealed in naked ugliness to those whose gaze is illumined by the Gospel light.

The fat and comfortable go about preaching, with patronizing condescension, the regeneration of mankind through a process of social uplifting—of doing what they assume the Creator failed to do; the lean and needy, starting out with the same assumption, look upon all prosperity as a conspiracy against their well-being, and proclaim subversion of every element that goes to make up the social fabric.

Serious minds, who watch events and weigh their value, who are anxious regarding the revolt against authority and the insane consequences of class rivalry, realize that not in themselves, either by subversive revolution, or by smug philanthropy is the remedy to be found, but in a Being higher than us all, to Whom we owe all that we have, and from Whom alone can come the relief for our evils; distinguishing the source of good—the Creator—from the source of evil—the perversion of the creature—and seeing the only possible rehabilitation of the latter in the creative and sustaining power of the former. "All men are vain, in whom there is not the knowledge of

God, and who by these good things that are seen understand not Him Who is, neither by attending to the works, have acknowledged who is the workman."²

This self-sufficiency of man, this itching to do things as of his own strength and ability, this leaving out of consideration Him who holds all we have and all we are in the hollow of His hand, has for result the destruction of all lesser authority as well. Hence this unbridled spirit of independence and revolt, which the Holy Father laments, not only in society but in the foundation of society, the family, and even at times within the hallowed precincts of the sanctuary.

With those outside the Church deprived of the guidance established by the Almighty, it is not surprising, that a revolt against authority and discontent with social conditions should prevail; but with us, who have the divinely appointed teacher to lead and the heavenly-given principles to guide us, we should have an un-failing antidote for earthly passions, and show by its fruitful use the way to others. But alas, on the contrary, the disregard of teacher and principles makes many so-called Catholics the worst examples of the social revolt—"corruptio optimi pessima": that which is choicest by nature is foulest of all, when in a state of corruption.

Faith is the only cure for the feverish pursuit of earthly vanities; and charity, the remedy for social conflicts and tumults. Faith in the supernatural must be the mainspring of human endeavour, and with faith the pursuit, the desire and the well-founded hope of the eternal reward. To this end, the clergy with the God-given powers of their sublime ministry should devote with unmingled fervor all the energies of their being; the religious, male and female, with their profession of obedience and renunciation, should be at all times a shining light, to excite in men the glorification of their heavenly Father; and the laity, nourishing their souls at the rich fountains of God's grace, abundantly flowing from the sacramental ministry of His

²Wis. XIII, 1.

Holy Church, should by the integrity of their lives and the radiant peace of their faith-illuminated souls, be a reproach to the spirit of revolt and discontent, produced by the vain self-sufficiency of a world, emancipated from the sweet yoke of a divinely revealed faith and the precious burden of a Christ-given law and authority.

I have said that we Catholics have every reason for fraternal sympathy and union, and no valid excuse for the contrary. But our love must go further. It must reach also the "other sheep", whom Christ's Vicar, following Christ's example, loves and longs to bring in, so that there may be one fold and one Shepherd. The vast multitude of these are deprived of the treasures dispensed by God's holy Church through no immediate fault of their own. Yet they too have souls to save, and an equal claim with us on the redemption purchased by the Saviour's blood. We have no cause to feel unkindly towards them. Bigotry can have no place in a Catholic heart. Rather do God's great favors to us require of us to prove to them, by our Christian love and by our upright lives, the value of the faith we possess, and thus to attract them to study it, and perhaps, by God's mercy, to be given the grace to share in its blessings. Remember always that, though imbued with ideas utterly fantastic and untrue regarding the teachings of our holy Church, and often falsely persuaded of our belief and practice of things too absurd for intelligent consideration, yet, in the face of all that, they unconsciously expect of us Catholics more than they do of others, and look with greater reproach upon the faults of a Catholic, as though subtly persuaded that in their lives there are to be found the elements of better things. While ever loyally maintaining our sacred rights against mistaken ideas, unjust opposition, or even active persecution, on the part of those outside our holy Church, we must still with the spirit of the Saviour's charity in much more trying circumstances, say, "Father, for-

In our Holy Father's blessing I, with His author-ization here add more, with sincerest prayers that the power of the love of Christ may give life and strength and comfort to all your hopes and undertakings for this world and the next, through the intercession of the heavenly patron of this diocese, the ever-blessed Mother of the Prince of Peace

✠ JOHN,
Bishop of Calgary

Calgary March 1st, 1915



TO OUR VENERABLE BROTHERS THE PATRI-
ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS, APOSTOLIC VICARS,
AND OTHER LEARNED OR ORDINARYS, CATHOLIC
PRELATES AND CLERGY OF THE APOSTOLIC
SEAT.

POPE BENEDICT XV

VENERABLE BROTHERN HEATH AND THE APOSTOLIC BLESSED

When by the unsearchable counsel of divine provi-
dence and will our apostolic father We were
called to the Chair of our most blessed Prince of the
Apostles, for the same reason which bore down and which
carries the Peter and Paul's seedless lambs feed
my sheep, I immediately We began to regale with
unspeakable joy that he took a committed to us are
a flock truly numerous, if there was or another of
embraces all marked. But without exception
have been delivered by Jesus Christ at the price of
his blood from the power of sinners are one shut
out from the benefits of his redemption. There are
as the divine Pastor has already supplied gathering part
of marked out the flock of the flock is the same he
points enough to sustain the rest. And other
sheep I have not yet seen and found them also I must
bring and they shall hear my voice.†

We were therefore, in our venerable Brethren,
that they began to find us content and grateful only to
find goodness was a warm and impulsive and and of
yearning for the salvation of all marked and content
with the flock. We were the welcome of the
cat in that Jesus made most in regaling the flock
in the cross. Thus, other keep them in the name
where they have gone, no.‡ We were therefore, as
We had looked from the height of the Apostolic dig-
nity upon the scene in which a human affairs were
going and had seen the lamentable state of civil
societies. We were filled with bitter sorrow. But how

*John XXI, 15-17

†John, X, 16

‡John, XVII, 11

such lowliness from our midst. I wished we have at least the common peace and welfare.

When Jesus Christ came from heaven for the very purpose of restoring the kingdom of peace which had been ruined by the evil of Satan, he chose no other foundation for it than that which thereby gave. Hence those words of his were often repeated. A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another.* "This is my commandment, that you love one another."† These things I command you, that you love one another.‡ As though the whole scope and purpose of his coming were to make men love each other. I stimulate us to this love, what motives has he not set before us. He bids us to lift up our eyes to heaven, to our ever-loving Father who dwells in heaven.§ Setting aside every difference of race of language and interest, he puts the universal prayer on the lips of all. "Our Father who art in heaven," if he even teaches that the Heavenly Father in bestowing nature is giving us not what we deserve. "Who maketh his sun to rise upon the good and bad, and saith to the just on the unjust."¶ He further declares that we are all brethren. "But as you are brethren,§ and brethren of Himself, that he might be the first born amongst many brethren."|| Then what ought most powerfully to urge us to brotherly love, even to watch those whom our natural pride would lead us to despise, we be went so far as to identify himself with the meanest of men in whom he wished us to recognize his own personal glory. As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me.** What more. At the close of his life he earnestly brought to the Father that all who should believe in him might be made one by the bond of

*John X, 11, 14.

†1 John XV, 12.

‡John XV, 17.

*Matthew, XXIII, 1.

†Matthew, VI, 2.

‡Matthew X, 45.

§Matthew XXIII, 4.

||Romans, VIII, 29.

**Matthew, XXV, 40.

charity. "As Thou Father, to me and I to Thee."†
Lastly when hanging on the Cross he saw, out his
blood runs all so that as if composite blood joined
together in one body mutual love should be found
amongst us. Just as mutual sympathy is found amongst
the members of the same body.

But in these times the common bond is fast & recent.
Never perhaps was I more comprehended more real help
than now. It is possible that with the stress help
from the teaching of the Gospel, the more the work of
Christ and the Church, the more the more has
been one of the biggest systems of mutual violence.
Yet the system is that men meet at all towards
each other in less and less fast and then more. Race
hatreds are becoming almost a more common a
divided to the nation to some extent and more than
by geographical position. In the same way that the
same way the different races are a more with mutual
envy all take as their supreme law their own self
interest.

You see venerable brethren how necessary it is
that we should be saved to bring back among
men the power of the charity of Christ. This shall be
our constant end and the chosen task of our Pontificate.
I thus have exhorted you to labour. But is not
grow weary of teaching and practicing the charity
of the Apostle St. John. "But we love one another?"
Doubtless there are numerous benevolent institutions
now doing useful and valuable work, but they do not
prove to be of real benefit unless they help in pro-
moting a true love. If God are our neighbour without
this they are nothing worth for. He that loveth not,
abideth in death"†

We have said that another cause of social disorder
lies in this that authority is generally disregarded.
For as soon as human authority began to emancipate
itself from God the creator and master of the universe,

†Joh. XVII, 21

†Joh. III, 22

†Joh. III, 14

the poor avoid the risk as though these had appropriated themselves what belongs to others. They are acting not only against justice and charity, but even against reason particularly because they themselves might better the rich assist on the force of honourable labour.

It would be superfluous to point out the consequences disastrous alike to individuals and to the community that flow from this social hatred. We all know what desperate resistance strikes by which the whole population has even its most necessary activities sadly checked, and then the riotous out-breaks in which resistance is frequently had to arms and the following bloodshed.

We will not now repeat the arguments that show the universal loss of wisdom in a similar error. This has been done with supreme wisdom by Our predecessor Nihilus in his message of the 15th July, but We appeal to your venerable Brethren to use your endeavours that not only extensive teaching be not forgotten, but also that all Catholic associations and congregations, seminaries and the Catholic press, if be adequately explained and explained as our circumstances may require, that also be all, and We do not hesitate to repeat that we make it our care to give every argument supplied by the Gospel by reason and by public or private good to stimulate a more mutual brotherly love in accordance with the divine law of charity. This brotherly love does not set itself to sweep away all differences of rank and condition, this is no more possible than it is possible in a living body that all the members should have the same place and function— but it has power to make those of a higher rank act towards those of a lower position with justice as is indeed imperative, but also with good will and kindness and consideration, and it makes those of a lower rank to be glad at the prosperity of others, and to have confidence in their readiness to help, just as in the

"For I have set thee thus I have over the nations as I over kingdoms to rule, and to destroy, and to build, and to plant." We shall be more successful to the best of our power in opposing what we do not promote what is good, and I shall cause the Prince of Pastors to demand an account of this service.

In this our first Assembly we felt it necessary to set before you a venerable brother, some of the chief matters calling for your solution, so that he was now getting ready to help We may the sooner attain the good We desire.

The first element on which the success of any society of men depends is the conduct of its members. We shall therefore make it one of our chief aims to do away with all that prevent fellowship and concord amongst Christians, and thus to secure unity of plan and of action. The enemies of God and the Church early see that a way to victory over us is opened whenever our discord is weakened by double courses, hence they are ever on the alert after they find us united to decide whether we are winning or losing. Let the seed of discord. We find that this has some times not been so often successful to the great detriment of the age. For this reason it is wrong that anyone should set aside the common rule as a authority in the preference that he does not agree to it. Let each submit his opinion to the higher ecclesiastical authority, and then obey as a duty, as we do. No private error is allowed. As the great ministers, as in newspapers or of public speeches to put before the world whatever in the Church. I know to whom God has given the teaching authority of the Church, to him it belongs to decide when and how he shall speak. The duty of others is to receive his words with reverence and obedience. In matters about which the Holy See has not given a decision and in which without injury to faith and ecclesiastical discipline, there may be differences of opinion, each may lawfully defend his own.

*Jeremiah, I, 10.

But a word requires there must be no offensive language for this may lead to grave troubles & charity and is not to mislead. As questions not with propriety and common sense must be shown. He must not cast suspicion on his brother or spirit of his exploit. We must not put pressure that someone use saying that it is names he others such as are marked in our tables should cease such names must be omitted or to be as "profane novelties of words" but are no other than a part of a new life as they lead to grave deterioration of the human in the faith in life. It is only that a part of the faith that nothing can be done. Nothing is kept away. It is either omitted or not to be used at all. This is the Catholic faith with which a man believes in this and steadfastly he must be kept. There is no doubt that a man must get rid of the profane words of the world and must not say. When it is a man that is a man only let him take heed to be serious what he says himself.

■ Attachment: Creed

[illegible][illegible]

*Tab. XXXI. 12

the divine wisdom. An obedient man shall speak of victory, but makes war on his own soul by following his guidance, and though they must not expect the help of God, they must not forsake Him.

But in addition to these things, which we are stating first, we find that there is need of the protection of law in his work of those who minister our Lord here and as laborers in His Church, that we have a true clergy. For this reason we have seen that even the agents agree in conducting their appointment of our clergy that has been done by various authorities in their state and a portion of the power of training clergy is the part of the clergy, and a portion of the salary. Although your are friends to the education of the gutter ignorantness. We exhort and encourage you to attend to it with all possible zeal. But it is a matter that we are not sure of being so important for the good of the Church, for since their education is a happy event to a people. We thank you for what we think of it, and hope that you are going further. It is thus we hope that we are encouraging those most of our People, and especially those given by God to our sacred ministry, that *Exhortatio ad clerum*, may be your motto, and that it may be kept in mind and most scrupulously observed.

There is one thing about which we are not so sure. We wish to advise you that the clergy are in the long as most dear to us as they are, if they are sure of their own salvation and of the transmission of their ministry that they be perfectly united and obedient to their authorities. We have already observed that some ministers of the sanctuary have been elected by popular spirit or independence and independence so characteristic of these days, and it has not an frequently happened for the Pastors of the Church to meet with serious and opposition where they had every right to expect cooperation and help. May those who have been so unhappy be forgetful of their duty.

†Proverbs, XXI 28

seriously reflect that the authority possessed by bishops whom the Holy Father with the help of the Church of God² sustains and sets, and if as We have seen those who resist our apostolic authority resist God, far more wickedly do they act who refuse obedience to the Father who in His Holy, consecrated and the sea³ His omnipower. "None charity" says St. Ignace of Antioch, "does not suffer me to be silent in your regard, that I have I want to say, to all mankind, that can be in agreement with the mind of God. For even thus our omnipowerful Father in the mind of the Father, as the Father, who is present throughout the earth, are in the mind of the Father Christ. Wherefore it is fitting that a full agreement with the mind of the Father." The language of the illustrious martyr has been repeated generation after generation by the faithful and the Holy Church.

During the recent past years, the burden of the bishops is always the same, heavier still is their anxiety for the protection of the Church. "For they will always be, to resist an authority, as we would"⁴ It is in fact, that authority is not being obeyed, since should increase the work, and any even of their office. I am aware the Holy Father said: "This is not excommunicated, and the Church." The Church is a people united with the priest, and a flock awaiting the shepherd. I therefore be that is not with the bishop, is not with the Church.

And now, generation has been, at the close of this letter, our thoughts go back spontaneously to the thought of peace with which we began. We pray with increasing fervor for the good of men and of the Church that this disastrous war may cease, for the good of men, so that in the bringing back of peace they may go forward on the path of the progress for the good of Christ's Church, that it may be left un

²Acts, XX, 28.

³Johns, X, 11, 17.

⁴1st Thessalonians, II, 1.

⁵1st Thessalonians, Letter 66, at 66.

⁶Hebrews, XIII, 17.

hindered to bear help and salvation to every part of the world. Too long has the Church been curtailed of its necessary freedom. It acted ever since the Head of the Church the Supreme Pontiff began to lack that defence of his freedom which the providence of God had raised up during the course of centuries. The loss of that protection has inevitably caused no light anxiety in the Catholic body. For all the children of the Roman Pontiff, whether near or living afar, have a right not to be left in doubt concerning the possession by their common Father of a true and undeniable freedom in the exercise of his Apostolic ministry.

While We pray for the speedy return of peace to the world, We also pray that an end be put to this abnormal state in which the Head of the Church is placed—a state which in many ways is an impediment to the common tranquility. Our Predecessors have protested, not from self-interest, but from a sense of sacred duty, against this state of things. Those protests We renew, and for the same reason—to protect the rights and dignity of the Apostolic See.

It remains for Us, venerable Brethren, to lift up our voices in prayer to God, in whose hands are the hearts of princes, and of all responsible for the continuance of the scourges now afflicting us, and to cry in the name of all mankind: "Give peace, O Lord, in our days." And may he who said of himself: "I am the Lord. I make peace," be moved by our prayers, and speedily visit the tempest now troubling civil and religious society. And may the Blessed Virgin be merciful to that hand to assist us, she who bore the Prince of Peace, may she regard and protect with a mother's love Us in our lowliness. Our Pontificate, the Church, and with the Church the souls of all men redeemed by the divine Blood of her Son.

As a pledge of heaven's gifts, and in sign of our good will We lovingly bestow on you, venerable Brethren,

*Iamas, XLV, 6-7

in your clergy, and on your people, the Apostolic Blessing

Given in Rome at St. Peter's, on the Feast of All Saints November 1st 1914 in the first year of Our Pontificate

INFINITUS A. PP.

PEACE SUNDAY

I

DECREE

His Holiness our very good Father Pope Benedict XV in deep affliction at the sight of a war which has ravaged thousands of young people, engulfs our sister cities and states, and rushes four shag nations to the brink of ruin yet bearing in its name Almighty God. A wise prerogative it is to heed by constraint and through pardon to preserve a moment by the prayers which spring from contrite and humble hearts. Desires ardently that above the clang of arms may be heard a voice of Faith, hope and charity alone capable of welding together the hearts of men in one mind and one spirit. Therefore with all He exports the strong and the good of

of the whole world to works of mortification and piety in expiation for the sins by which we have called down upon ourselves the just wrath of our Heavenly Father has ordained that throughout the Catholic Church when prayers shall be offered in order to obtain from the mercy of Almighty God the peace which we desire

For this purpose it is hereby decreed that in every Metropolitan Cathedral, Parish and every other Church in all European countries on the 7th day of February next being the Sunday Called Sexagesima

in all dioceses situated OUTSIDE OF EUROPE ON THE 21st DAY OF MARCH (being PASSION SUNDAY) there shall be celebrated special religious

before the Most Blessed Sacrament while solemnly exposed, a Plenary Indulgence.

From the Vatican, January 10, 1915.

PETER CARDINAL GASPARRI,
Secretary of State

II

PRAYER

Dismayed by the horrors of a war which is bringing ruin to peoples and nations, we turn, O Jesus, to Thy most loving Heart as to our last hope. O God of Mercy, with tears we invoke Thee to end this fearful scourge: O King of Peace, we humbly implore the peace for which we long. From Thy sacred Heart Thou didst shed forth over the world divine Charity, so that discord might end and love alone might reign among men. During Thy Life on earth Thy heart beat with tender compassion for the sorrows of men: in this hour made terrible with burning hate, with bloodshed and with slaughter, once more may Thy divine Heart be moved to pity. Pity the countless mothers in anguish for the fate of their sons; pity the numberless families now bereaved of their fathers; pity Europe over which broods such havoc and disaster. Do Thou inspire rulers and peoples with counsels of meekness, do Thou heal the discords that tear the nations asunder; Thou Who didst shed Thy Precious Blood that they might live as brothers, bring men together once more in loving harmony. And as once before to the cry of the Apostle Peter: *Save us, Lord, we perish!* Thou didst answer with words of mercy and didst still the raging waves, so now deign to hear our trustful prayer, and give back to the world peace and tranquillity.

And do thou, O most Holy Virgin, as in other times of sore distress be now our help, our protection and our safeguard. Amen.

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